

Message from James S. Marks, MD, MPH Director, National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

Now, more than ever, it is critical that we step up prevention efforts to fight chronic diseases, including heart disease, stroke, diabetes, cancer, and arthritis. An aging population coupled with poor lifestyle choices, including tobacco use, poor diet, and lack of physical activity, means that as a nation, we face a chronic disease epidemic that will radically change the quality of life of our citizens and potentially bankrupt the health care system.

We are at a crossroads where the health and well-being of our generation and future generations will be determined by the actions that we as a society undertake today. The following exemplary state programs demonstrate approaches that public health professionals at the state and local levels are pursuing to address this epidemic of chronic disease. While some of these programs are in the early stages, others have yielded encouraging results with dramatic implications for other states and prevention programs targeting other health conditions.

As the nation's prevention agency, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) continues to fund and work with states to implement effective science-based interventions. At the National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion (NCCDPHP), this is our second year showcasing state programs that not only demonstrate the commitment to reduce chronic disease, but also serve as a model for other states that want to implement programs that work.

We hope that by sharing successes from around the country, we will continue to build awareness for programs that promote a better quality of life. We believe strongly that programs like these can maximize the health of our citizens, provide good health value, and help slow the increases in medical care costs. We encourage you to join us in the fight against chronic disease and thank all of our partners for making these programs a success.

Here's to a healthy 2003.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "James S. Marks". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "James" and last name "Marks" clearly legible.

